



**LOWELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
**Henry J. Mroz Administration Office**  
**155 Merrimack Street**  
**Lowell, Massachusetts 01852**

**Daniel Rourke**  
**Mayor and Chairperson**

**Dominik Lay**  
**Vice-Chairperson**

**Fred Bahou**  
**David Conway**  
**Eileen Delrossi**  
**Jackie Doherty**  
**Connie A. Martin**

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**School Improvement &  
Performance Management  
Subcommittee Meeting**

**Tuesday, June 17, 2025**  
**City Hall, Council Chamber**  
**6:30 p.m.**

Subcommittee Members Present:	Chairperson Bahou, Ms. Doherty and Mr. Lay
School Committee Members Present:	Ms. Delrossi
School Department Personnel Present:	Mr. Skinner, Superintendent
Representative from Aramark:	Ms. Tedford, Manager

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Chairperson Bahou called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. The following agenda items were discussed:

1. [Motion by Dominik Lay and Fred Bahou]: To have a proper department look at menu options in addition to the standard pizza offering.
2. [Motion by Dominik Lay and Fred Bahou]: To have a proper department report on packaging for school lunches.
3. [Motion by Dominik Lay and Fred Bahou]: Ask the Superintendent to invite the Food Service Director for a discussion on lunch portions for all middle schools because students need for growth mentally and physically are different since the eighth grade students may be physically bigger than the fifth-grade.

Mr. Bahou introduced Ms. Tedford and informed her that students have expressed a desire for more meal options.

Ms. Tedford shared that in April, the daily average of meals served was approximately 10,250, with peak days reaching up to 10,750. She noted that student favorites include pizza, hamburgers, and Asian-inspired dishes. She explained that Aramark chefs regularly conduct tastings, and successful dishes are added to the menu. In addition, recipes from both Cooks and Project Bread have been incorporated into the offerings.

Mr. Bahou observed that tastings appear to be limited to certain schools and inquired whether they could be expanded districtwide.

Ms. Tedford confirmed that this is the goal and added that the Project Bread chef is actively collaborating with them on this initiative.

Mr. Lay emphasized that Lowell High School in particular needs more variety and options. He mentioned that some students have requested fried rice as a menu item.

Ms. Tedford responded that fried rice is, in fact, served once a month.

Mr. Bahou then initiated a discussion on environmentally friendly packaging and the overall quality of school meals. He inquired about the current food packaging, specifically whether it could be made more environmentally friendly while still keeping meals warm and fresh.

Ms. Tedford responded that the district is actively working to reduce plastic usage. She noted that there is a composting program in place at Lowell High School, Greenhalge, and Rogers STEM Academy, with compost materials being picked up daily. While the district is open to spending more on sustainable options, Ms. Tedford explained that any changes must also take food quality and cost into account. She emphasized that while environmental improvements are important, they must be balanced with practicality and student needs. The issue will be researched further over the summer to determine feasible options. She also mentioned that students generally prefer hot meals.

**Ms. Doherty moved to have the Committee receive updates in October on packaging, breakfast options, and culturally diverse food offerings. The motion was seconded by Mr. Lay. The motion passed with 3 yeas.**

Ms. Tedford then discussed alternative packaging options with the Committee. She explained that the district's current menu complies with USDA's National School Lunch Program meal pattern. All entrées include two-ounce equivalent portions of grains and meat alternatives, placing the meals at the higher end of weekly nutritional requirements. These calculations are based on weekly averages and account for the fact that not all students take every meal component. If students were to consume every component, they would receive higher amounts of calories, fiber, and protein—keeping them fuller for longer. However, increasing portion sizes could result in non-compliance with USDA regulations regarding calories, sodium, and saturated fat on many days. Additionally, providing larger portions to certain groups would require maintaining separate recipes and production records. For example, adding one additional protein portion for 8th-grade students alone would cost approximately \$85,000.

Mr. Lay requested that Ms. Tedford share the USDA guidelines with the Committee.

Ms. Doherty moved to adjourn at 7:59 p.m.; the motion was seconded by Mr. Bahou. 3 yeas

Respectfully submitted,



Ms. Crocker-Roberge, Assistant  
Superintendent for School Leadership  
for Liam Skinner, Superintendent

WCR/mes